



# Navy Cargo Handlers Deploy Overseas

## *Naval Expeditionary Logistics Support Force Mobilizes Reservists*

*By CDR Tom Gresback, USNR*

In early January, over 550 Naval Reservists of the Naval Expeditionary Logistics Support Force (NAVELSF) were recalled to active duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. They are now serving in Iraq and Kuwait providing cargo handling, fuel handling, mail operations, and air logistics support. This was one of the larger single Naval Reserve Force mobilizations to date in support of OIF. Significant about this mobilization was the fact that SKs, BMs and Supply Corps officers relieved an Army Battalion which was scheduled to rotate as part of the DoD force rotation plan. Navy Expeditionary Logistics is fulfilling a critical combat support mission previously filled by the Army – that's a paradigm shift.

In December, CENTCOM, through the Chief of Naval Operations, ordered this Naval Reserve mobilization to fulfill a portion of the cargo handling requirements in the AOR. "The reason we have been able to put a quality group together on relatively short notice is due to the fact this force is made up of battalions who are trained and ready to deploy," said NAVELSF Commander, RADM Robert Percy III, USNR, Supply Corps.

DoD has changed the way they access the Reserve Component. They are talking among the services to maximize force structure and review common capabilities throughout the services. NAVELSF is thinking outside the box to support the mission of today's war fighter.

"As a combat support force, it's critical that we continually transform our expeditionary logistics capability to the changing dynamics facing today's combatant commander. Our ability to work and train with the Army in Port Operations, with the Air Force in Fuels Operations, and the Marine Corps in Air Cargo Logistics, is just the beginning of how we are adapting to provide forces to the joint war fighter in a new environment," said RADM Percy.

"Joint forces capability underlies the tremendous war fighting capability of the United States military," said CDR Stephan Oliver, NAVELSF Readiness Project Officer. "The Navy's ability to replace Army logistic forces in theater and perform the same function is a perfect example of the flexibility of joint forces doctrine. This force rotation marks the first time the NAVELSF has been tasked to this magnitude in a joint environment." Oliver, a drilling Reservist from (???town name here???), VA, was mobilized to active duty supporting NAVELSF for OIF II.

CDR Deborah Haven, Commanding Officer, Naval Cargo Handling Battalion 9 Columbus, OH, said, "I'm very excited about participating in this mission to provide freedom to the people of Iraq. It is a significant event and a fabulous opportunity to represent the United States Navy.

"As a commanding officer, I've been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and energy each member of my battalion has put forth to participate in this mobilization. I've also been extremely impressed by the families and the support we've received from employers. Naval Reservists cannot perform and be committed without support from their families and employers."

LCDR Mike Krall, Executive Officer, NCHB 14, Port Hueneme, CA, said, "This mobilization has given us an incredible opportunity to put what we have learned to good use in support of our country. Our group comprises team members from across the United States, and it has not taken long for this professional team of men and women to build a strong organization. Veterans and nonprior service members have integrated and trained together to meet the challenges ahead — there is incredible heart in this organization. We are ready to integrate and relieve the Army and execute this mission with pride. The Joint Service environment is our future, giving the United States the ability to team our resources to support continuous contingencies with a flexible force."

### Mobilized Battalions and Companies

#### ■ Navy Supply Support Battalion 1 Phoenix, AZ.

Commanded by Captain Ray English, Supply Corps, USNR.  
- With companies in: Phoenix, AZ; Encino, CA; Ft. Worth, TX; Lubbock, TX; San Diego, CA; Tucson, AZ; Sacramento, CA.

#### ■ Navy Cargo Handling Battalion 14 Port Hueneme, CA.

Commanded by Commander Millard Lewis, Jr., Supply Corps, USNR.  
- With companies in: Port Hueneme, CA; Las Vegas, NV; Los Angeles, CA.

#### ■ Navy Cargo Handling Battalion 11 Jacksonville, FL.

Commanded by Commander Fred Boyles, Supply Corps, USNR.  
- With companies in: Jacksonville, FL; St Petersburg, FL; Tampa, FL.

#### ■ Navy Cargo Handling Battalion 9 Columbus, OH.

Commanded by Commander Deborah Haven, Supply Corps, USNR.  
- With companies in: Columbus, OH; Cincinnati, OH; Huntington, WV; Youngstown, OH.

The Naval Reserve Expeditionary Logistics Support Force (NAVELSF) delivers expeditionary logistics support using Naval Reserve Force capabilities. NAVELSF's mission includes operational support of national military strategy, including routine peacetime support, crisis response, humanitarian operations, and combat service support missions throughout the world.

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